

CHAPTER FOUR

ISAAC OLIVER WALL (1849 - 1932): SETTLING THE UTAH TERRITORY



Isaac Oliver Wall was a community builder. From his humble beginnings on the Great Plains of the United States of America to the Round Valley of Wasatch County, Utah, Isaac used his hands to build roads, churches, and schools. He used his mind to establish government and laws for new communities. He cared for his family and created unity between them. Without the work of Isaac Wall, Wasatch County would not have been established as efficiently as it was in the tops of the Wasatch Mountains of Utah. As one of the first county commissioners of Wasatch County hundreds of settlers depended on his sharp mind to make sound decisions concerning their welfare. He shaped the Heber Valley with his intellect and skill.

Isaac was born in 1849 on the western frontier of the United States. The Latter-day Saints were ousted from their settlements in Ohio, Missouri and Illinois. The saints were in search of a new haven where they could worship without oppression from others. Brigham Young and other Church leaders led the saints across the Mississippi River and into Iowa. The Mormon exodus from Nauvoo, Illinois began during the winter of 1845-46. The first challenge they encountered was transporting themselves and their possessions across the Mississippi. The river froze over for a brief period allowing some to cross on the ice, but most people went by ferry or small skiff; both methods were hazardous to the travelers.

Two important Mormon trails crossed Iowa. The northern trail was the route of the handcart companies in 1856. The pioneers of 1846 traversed the southern route. Most of the camp remained at a junction called Richardson's Point for nearly two weeks to improve their organization during a spell of bad weather. Nevertheless, by



*The Isaac Oliver Wall family home in Wallsburg,
(from left to right): Mary Jane, Cecil, Edith, Isaac, Marcia Ann, and Jessie.*

the time they reached Chariton River, about 100 miles west of Nauvoo, they had only averaged two to three miles per day, many people were widely scattered, and some had even returned to Nauvoo. A major reorganization was required.

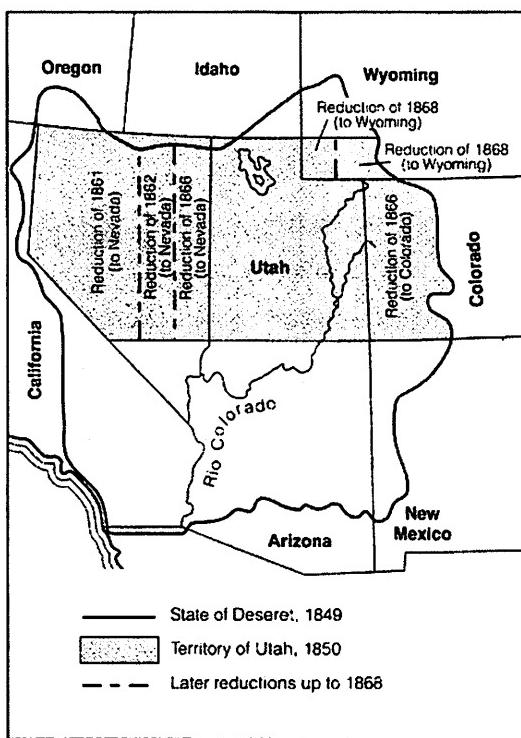
The 1846 route hugged the Missouri border because of the proximity to civilization. Church leaders intended to cross northwestern Missouri to Banks Ferry, an important staging place for points west on the Missouri River. Hostile reaction from the Missourians caused the Mormons to turn north again. Further west, at Locust Creek, William Clayton composed the revered Mormon hymn, "Come, Come, Ye Saints." Garden Grove, one of the two "permanent" settlements, was just about halfway across Iowa, being 144 miles west of Nauvoo and 120 miles east of the Missouri River. The saints reached Garden Grove on 24 April. When the saints, on 18 May, reached Mount Pisgah it was designated by Parley P. Pratt as the second "permanent camp." The saints made their winter resting place on the Missouri River in Council Bluffs, Iowa and across the river in Winter Quarters, Nebraska.

William Madison Wall and his wife Nancy were driven from their home in Ramus, Illinois in 1845. They made the 300-mile trek to Council Bluffs with other Saints. While at Council Bluffs, the Walls gave birth to their first boys: William Madison Jr. on 19 October 1847 and Isaac Oliver on 21 October 1849. After four years at Council Bluffs cultivating crops for migrating saints, Brigham Young asked William M. Wall to bring his family to Salt Lake, where the earlier settlers had been for three years. In 1850, the Walls made their journey to the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

Isaac was only a one-year-old when he crossed the plains with his family. The trek from Winter Quarters to Salt Lake was 1,110 miles of rocky and mountainous terrain. After arriving in Salt Lake in September 1850, William Wall took his family south to Provo to settle. He lived there for ten years. The Walls moved into Fort Provo. Indians attacked the fort just before the Walls reached Utah. After the Battle at Fort Provo, the Indian hostility subsided and the settlers were able to move outside the protective walls of the fort. Without having to fear for their children's safety, Nancy and William were able to let their children explore their new home in Provo.

During his childhood, Isaac and his older brother would go swimming and rafting at Provo Lake "on a raft of grass and weeds that they made."¹ He attended school at the old Provo seminary building and attended Church as a young boy. In 1857, at the age of eight, Isaac was baptized a member of the Church. Isaac's world had changed significantly in such a very short time.

When the saints first arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, they were satisfied that they were isolated from their enemies and could worship without persecution. Brigham Young once said: "If the people of the United States will let us alone for ten years, we will ask no odds of them."² Shortly after, Young and other Church leaders desired growth for their religion and their way of life. The Mormons were expanding their borders. The Church was also expanding throughout the world. William Wall, Isaac's father, was at the time serving a mission on the island of Australia. This growth did not come easily for the Latter-day Saints. Conflict developed with government appointees, and great sacrifice was required to gather Church members to "Zion" and to colonize. During Isaac's childhood this philosophy of growth was expanding. Construction of the Salt Lake Temple had started as well as the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. With this transition occurring, life in Utah would never be the same. Government officials were debating if they should petition for statehood or become a territory.



In 1848, Church leaders laid plans to negotiate with the United States government for either statehood or territorial status. In March of 1849 an election was held to ratify officers for the proposed territory, and by early May a 22-foot long petition containing 2,270 signatures was on its way to Washington, D.C., proposing the creation of an immense territory including all of what is now Utah and Nevada, portions of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, and Oregon, and a third of California, including a narrow strip on the Pacific coast taking in the port city of San Diego.

John M. Bernhisel, a medical doctor with political acumen, was chosen to take Deseret's petition to the nation's capital. En route to Washington from Deseret he met with several key politicians in the East and succeeded in soliciting considerable support for his project. In November 1849, Dr. Bernhisel met in Philadelphia with Wilford Woodruff and Colonel Thomas L. Kane, a close friend of the Church. A year earlier at the request of Brigham Young, Kane had been in Washington and had spoken with President James K. Polk and other leading officials about territorial government for Deseret. He had found little sympathy for the Mormons in Washington and therefore recommended that Deseret apply for statehood. Under territorial status officials would be appointed by the president.

Kane told Wilford Woodruff, "You are better without any government from the hands of Congress than a Territorial government. The political intrigues of government officers will be against you. You can govern yourselves better than they can govern you ... You do not want corrupt political men from Washington strutting around you with military epaulets and dress who will speculate out of you all they can." Kane also recommended that Brigham Young be the governor because "His head is not filled with law books and lawyer's tactic but he has power to see through men and things."²³

By the time Bernhisel met with Kane, Church officials in Salt Lake City had also concluded that they should direct their lobbying efforts toward becoming a state rather than a territory. They drew up a formal constitution for the State of Deseret, complete with the necessary elected officials, including First Presidency members Brigham Young as governor, Heber C. Kimball as lieutenant governor, and Willard Richards as secretary of state. Almon W. Babbitt was selected as a delegate to Congress, and he left in July with a draft of the constitution. Babbitt printed the document in Kanesville, Iowa, and then in December met Dr. Bernhisel in Washington.

Unfortunately, Deseret's application for statehood was not given any real

consideration. As Colonel Kane and Dr. Bernhisel quickly perceived, Washington officials were preoccupied with the conflict between the northern and southern states over the extension of slavery into the territory obtained in the war with Mexico. From December 1849 through September 1850 Congress vehemently debated slavery-related issues and showed little concern for the Mormon colony in the Great Basin.

The Church's best friend in Congress proved to be Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, who had befriended Joseph Smith and the saints during the Nauvoo period. Douglas, the chairman of the Senate committee on territories, met with Bernhisel and told him that he would help him take the petition through the legislative process. Although Congress willingly agreed to rapidly growing California's petition for statehood, the slavery controversy prohibited serious consideration of the statehood petitions for sparsely populated Deseret and New Mexico. Senator Douglas decided to call for territorial status instead, to appease the South, which could not accept more senators from "slave-free" states. He also changed Deseret's name to Utah (after the Ute Indians) to avoid offending his colleagues, particularly Senator Thomas Benton of Missouri, who thought Deseret sounded too much like desert.⁴

After a lengthy debate, Congress completed a legislative package known as the Compromise of 1850, which, among other things, admitted California into the Union as a free state and designated Utah and New Mexico as territories with the right to decide by popular sovereignty whether they would eventually become slave or free states. On 9 September 1850 President Millard Fillmore signed the bill creating the Utah Territory. Neither the Latter-day Saints nor the federal officials knew then that this action would begin 46 years of mistrust and conflict before statehood was finally granted.

Bernhisel's skill as a lobbyist became particularly important as President Fillmore considered appointment of officers for the new territory. Meeting with the president, Bernhisel stated, "The people of Utah cannot but consider it their right, as American citizens to be governed by men of their own choice, entitled to their confidence, and united with them in opinion and feeling."⁵ Fillmore fearing that the Senate would not approve an all Mormon state, compromised and selected four Mormons and four others to the federally appointed slots. The appointees for the new territory of Utah were Brigham Young, governor and superintendent of Indian affairs; Broughton D. Harris of Vermont, secretary; Joseph Buffington of Pennsylvania, chief

justice; Zerubbabel Snow of Ohio and Perry E. Brocchus of Alabama, associate justices; Seth M. Blair of Utah, U.S. attorney; Joseph L. Heywood of Utah, U.S. marshal; and Henry R. Day, Indian agent.

Even though Utah achieved a territory status, there continued to be conflicts between Mormons and non-Mormons. Throughout the early and mid 1850s, fragments of information about the federal government's action reached the Salt Lake Valley. Upon learning that he was appointed governor and assigned to take a census and establish legislative districts, Brigham Young got to work immediately after taking the oath of office on 3 February 1851. An election for other officials was held in August, the most important official elected being John M. Bernhisel, as territorial delegate to Congress.

Clashes between Mormon and non-Mormon appointees in political power caused many quarrels. Conflict between the saints and the "gentile" officials began almost immediately. The territorial secretary, Broughton Harris, accused Brigham Young of irregularities in handling the census and election, which technically could not be certified without the secretary. Mrs. Harris condescendingly referred to the Mormon men and their plural wives as hardly better than animals. Because of his alienation, Harris refused to turn over to Young the territorial seal and the \$24,000 appropriated for running the government. As a result of this discord Harris and others left Utah for Washington, D.C. in September 1851 with "highly colored stories" about the Mormons.

On another occasion, Judge Perry Brocchus asked Brigham Young for permission to speak in the Church's general conference. After expressing gratitude for the kindness and hospitality of the saints, he launched into a diatribe against the Mormons for their lack of patriotism and the immorality of their women. The audience was infuriated with Brocchus's speech. President Young took the stand and rebuked Brocchus for his imprudent remarks. The two men later exchanged letters, which, instead of achieving accord, revealed an irreconcilable difference. From the non-Mormon point of view, the Mormons were guilty of sedition for speaking harshly against the United States and its officials, they were a peculiar and immoral people because of their unusual marriage practices, and they were under the "un-American" political domination of their church leaders. The Latter-day Saints, on the other hand, felt justified in criticizing the United States for not redressing their grievances against

Missouri and not bringing the murderers of Joseph and Hyrum Smith to justice. Furthermore, they pointed out that despite these injustices, they were loyal to the Constitution.

Finally in 1854, at the conclusion of Brigham Young's term of four years as governor, President Franklin Pierce refused the entreaties of the Utah citizens to reappoint Young. He instead selected Colonel E. J. Steptoe as governor. Steptoe was in Utah on assignment to study the feasibility of a military road through the territory. Instead of accepting the governorship, Steptoe signed a petition that Brigham Young be reappointed; he then left for California. Pierce offered the position to others, but when they also declined he reappointed Brigham Young as governor. The Mormons faced many adversaries to their religion and colonizing missions from government officials as well as from Indians in the territory.

In 1858, when William Madison Wall returned home from his mission in Australia, Brigham Young assigned him to build a road from Provo to the Heber Valley and then to colonize the area. Isaac Oliver was nearly ten-years-old at this time. Isaac helped his father on the road when he was out of school. After the Provo Canyon Road was completed, William M. Wall established his farm in Round Valley (named for its bowl-like appearance) in 1859. In 1862, at the age of twelve, Isaac began carrying mail on horseback during the summer months. No mail service was available during the winter. When the spring runoff made the Provo River impossible to cross, Isaac extended a cable from trees on both sides of the river and transferred the mail pouches to a rider from Provo.

Later English immigrants began to establish a community called Heber — which was named for Elder Heber C. Kimball who had baptized many of them into the Church. These colonizers and those of the Wall party began building homes and raising crops outside of their walled forts.

In about 1864 and 1865 a few people began to build homes from the red sandstone so abundant in the area. This stone was the building material for many of the fine buildings in this new county and within the city of Salt Lake. In 1864, the first Church buildings were being erected and were dedicated by Brigham Young and other Church leaders. These communities were booming, especially the town of Wallsburg — named after William Wall — and the town of Heber. This growing population received an additional boost when all of the towns were forced to move together for protection against the Indians.

On 5 May 1864, an act of Congress was to force the Ute Indians of Sanpete and

Sevier Counties to a reservation in eastern Wasatch County. The Indians, led by Chief Black Hawk were bitter about the move and refused to stay on the reservation land. This band of Indians roamed the state and on 10 April 1865 became involved in an incident with white settlers near Manti in Sanpete County. A white person was reported, in a drunken state, to have pulled an Indian off a horse and insulted him. This incident incited the band of Indians to go on the war path.

By 1866, the Indians were making random raids on white settlers. They stole cattle and threatened the lives of many. Several Mormon settlers were killed during these raids in Sanpete and Sevier counties. White settlers would, at times, retaliate by killing Indians. What was later known as the Black Hawk War had begun.

THE BLACK HAWK WAR

Because the Indian reservation was located in Wasatch County, the leaders of the territory and the territorial militia advised the communities to band together to protect themselves. On 26 May 1866, Colonel Robert T. Burton and David J. Ross came to Heber and enrolled all the able-bodied men in the valley to protect the people and their animals against Indian attack. John W. Witt was appointed major of the county militia with Charles Wilcken as adjutant. William Wall was appointed as Captain of the cavalry and John Hamilton and Thomas Todd were captains of the infantry. These men formed the Wasatch Militia. Their duty was to make peace with the Indians. Isaac Wall and his brother, William Jr., were among those who volunteered for this military service. He was 16 years-old when he volunteered to serve under his father in the Black Hawk War.

William Madison Wall and his sons, Isaac and William, Jr., would have many adventures to share with their families about the Black Hawk War. The Walls had patience with their Indian neighbors. This patience brought peace from the local Ute Tribes.

In 1867, the white settlers invited Chief Tabby and all of his tribe to a feast within their community. A large bowery was built for the occasion. They killed an ox and enjoyed a great feast. All the Indians that attended were grateful for the invitation and were given the leftover food and supplies as tokens of peace. This feast created a feeling of good will between the settlers and the Indians in Wasatch County. But war continued in other parts of the state until 1868 when peace was finally achieved in all

the counties.

With peace established, the settlers, including the Wall family, returned to their original homes. The Wasatch Militia was inactive for many years. William and his sons worked on the farm in Wallsburg during this time. With peace established with the Indians the settlers were more apt to move out on their own to break ground on their homesteads. Isaac spent much of the time as a teenager herding the family's cattle and cultivating their crops. He also helped his father make repairs and refinements on the Provo Canyon Road.

It was from his father's example that Isaac learned to utilize his hands as a builder and his mind as an engineer. Throughout his life in the Heber Valley, Isaac's public service would be the buildings he built with his hands and engineered with his mind. A few of the buildings he helped construct still stand throughout Wasatch County.

While making repairs on the Canyon Road in early fall 1869, Isaac's father became ill and was taken to the Haw's home in Provo where his wife, Nancy had moved to take care of her mother's estate. He had come to Provo to see if the doctors



Ute Chief Tabby was one of the prominent players in the Black Hawk War.

could do anything for the Bright's Disease which caused his death. William M. Wall died on 18 September 1869.

At 20-years-old, Isaac took on the responsibility of being man of the house. Caring for his father's fields and family was not an easy task. The family had grown substantially as his father practiced plural marriage and had four other wives. The financial burden was heavy and the pressure was great.

As the Walls anticipated the blessings of the harvest that year, their hopes were dashed. A hoard of grasshoppers claimed their crops before they could see any reward for a year's worth of labor devastated. Their work in the fields had been in vain. The early pioneers had suffered a similar problem in their first harvest in the Salt Lake Valley, however, theirs had a different outcome than that of the Walls.

The first settlers of Salt Lake arrived in late-July 1847. Because of their difficult conditions and their late planting season, the settlers naturally looked forward to the harvest of new crops the following year, but late spring frosts injured much of the wheat and garden vegetables. Then a May and June drought injured more of their crops. Worse yet, hordes of crickets descended from the foothills and began devouring what remained. Men, women and children turned out with sticks, shovels, brooms, and gunny sacks to combat the pests. They used fire and even dug trenches to drown the crickets, but these measures failed to stop the onslaught. For about two weeks they battled and prayed for relief. Crop failure meant disaster for the present colony and no food for the more than 2,000 saints planning to immigrate that year.

Finally on a Sabbath day, while Charles C. Rich was preaching, sea gulls from the Great Salt Lake flew in and began to devour the insects. "They would eat the crickets and throw them up again and fill themselves again and right away throw them up again," reported Priddy Meeks. The gulls continued these attacks until the crickets were effectively eliminated. Meeks said, "I guess this circumstance changed our feeling considerable for the better."⁶

Those saints nurtured the remaining crops throughout the summer and on 10 August held a harvest feast. Elder Parley P. Pratt described the feast as:

Large sheaves of wheat, rye, barley, oats and other productions were hoisted on poles for public exhibition, and there was prayer and thanksgiving,

congratulations, songs, speeches, music, dancing, smiling faces and merry hearts. In short, it was a great day with the people of these valleys, and long to be remembered by those who had suffered and waited anxiously for the results of a first effort to redeem the interior deserts of America, and to make her hitherto unknown solitudes 'blossom as a rose.'⁷

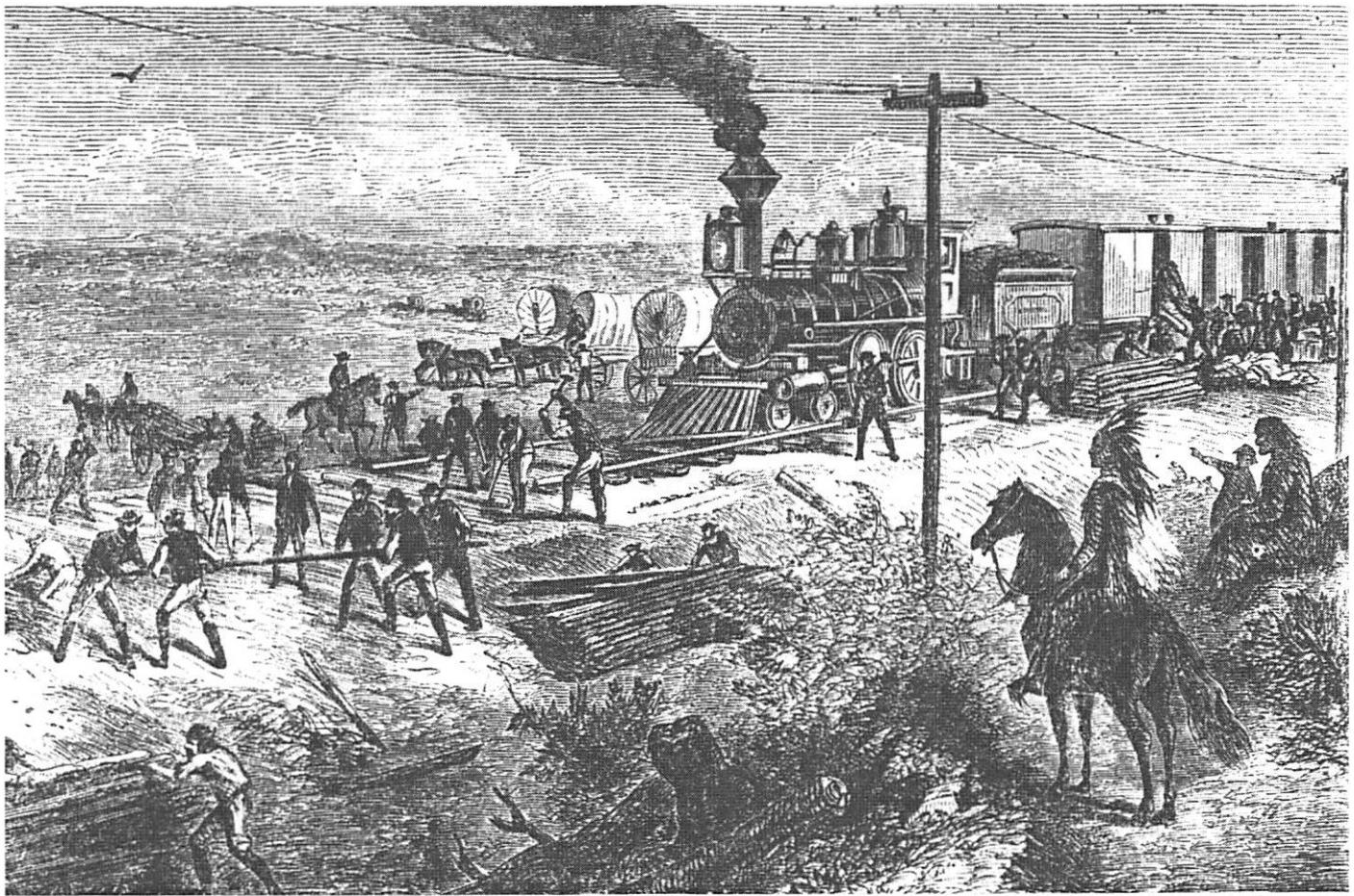
ISAAC WALL & THE RAILROAD

There was no celebration in Wallsburg when the Wall's crop was lost to the grasshoppers. This tragedy and the death of William Wall placed this family into desperate situations and dire straits. The family needed immediate cash flow to sustain the basic needs of food, clothing, farm upkeep and other necessities. To counter the grasshopper disaster, Isaac Oliver decided to go to Nevada to earn money. He worked for the railroad companies between Nevada and Utah and delivered freight between Utah and Nevada for five years between 1870 and 1875.

Many Utahns went to Nevada for work during this time. The railroad attracted many as did the potential of mining gold and silver. During this time there was a second gold rush taking place in southern Nevada near the Mormon settlement of Las Vegas, where thousands of dollars in gold was unearthed. This was a source of large income potential. Miners who discovered strains of gold in the ground were instant millionaires. Isaac earned enough money to live on and to send home to the farm in Wallsburg. Many saints were forced to leave their homes for the California coast and Nevada to earn money quickly so they would not be forced from their farms and settlements.

In fact, when gold was discovered at Coloma in Northern California on 24 January 1848 at John Sutter's lumber mill, many of the original people present were Mormons. Of the 11 white men and one woman present, at least six were Latter-day Saints from the Mormon Battalion, encouraged by President Young to stay at the gold find and earn money to send home to help improve the economy of the Utah Territory.

The most widely accepted record of this famous discovery comes from the journal of battalion member Henry Bigler. It reads: "Monday 24th this day some kind of mettle was found in the tail race that looks like goald [sic] first discovered by James



The first Transcontinental Railroad was completed in Utah in 1869.

Martial [Marshall] the Boss of the Mill.”⁸

In 1875, Isaac returned from Nevada to work the family farm in Wallsburg. It was at this time that he met Marcia Ann Glenn a young woman of 18, who had moved with her family to Wallsburg while Isaac was in Nevada. Marcia’s parents were Robert Wilson and Sarah Williams Glenn who had emigrated to Utah from North Carolina like William Wall had done. The Glenn family earlier lived near Sanpete and Sevier Counties. However, because of the on going Black Hawk War skirmishes throughout the state, the Glenns were forced to relocate to Wasatch County for safety reasons. They moved from Heber to Wallsburg in 1871 and lived in a round-log house. Isaac and Marcia got to know each other throughout the summer and were married on 26 November 1876 in the Wallsburg church building by Daniel Bigelow. Two years

later, they were sealed to one another in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City.

Members of the LDS Church believe that couples can be married for “time and all eternity” through the sealing ordinance performed in the Endowment House and Temple. The couple lived in Wasatch County all of their lives. The first years of their marriage they spent within Wallsburg. In 1891, Isaac broke new ground for his own farm. Their new home was found on the Sagebrush Flats (now Charleston), northwest of Wallsburg. Starting a new farm was a challenge to any frontiersman. New irrigation ditches had to be dug, equipment had to be bought and crops needed to be planted. But over time Isaac and Marcia were able to overcome these challenges.

Isaac Oliver and Marcia Glenn Wall had seven children: Edith (27 September 1877), Jessie (1 August 1880), Cecil Isaac (14 September 1884), Mary Jane (7 October 1887), Amy Grace (7 October 1889), Harold (9 January 1893), and Ruby (15 May 1895).

Though their lives were difficult, life was not all work in Wasatch County; residents liked to play but they had to create their own entertainment. During the winter of 1861 some locals formed the Heber City Dramatic Association and performed in the log cultural hall. The first productions were so successful that there was talk of building a new social hall the next year. Although the residents hauled sandstone to start construction, they did not complete it. John Crook claimed it was because the residents were not united; the bishop suggested that the people should build a church



The Schneiter's Hot Pots (now the Homestead Resort) was a popular recreational area in Wasatch County during the time that Isaac was growing up.

before they worked on a social hall.⁹

Marcia Wall's mother Sarah Glenn brought Wallsburg its first theatrical play. She acquired a copy of a three-act play. She needed to hand write a copy for each of the cast members. Polly Bigelow Allred and Isabell Kirby and Sarah would work into the late hours of night. After this hard, tedious work the play was a success. This play was the first of many to come.

Besides plays, residents developed bands and choirs. With settlers from all parts of the world, a multicultural entertainment base was established. From the German-speaking immigrants forming a brass band to the Swiss settlers organizing a yodeling club, the settlers of Wasatch County created entertainment of all sorts. The "hot pots" in nearby Midway provided "health pools" where visitors could relax in water from 70 to 100 degrees. In 1878 Simon Schneitter bought the most famous hot pot and created a resort with a swimming pool and hotel. According to family legend, swimmers were hungry when they got out, so Fannie Schneitter started feeding them in her dining room. This developed into a restaurant and later into the Homestead Resort.¹⁰

AGRICULTURE AND MINING IN WASATCH COUNTY

Isaac Wall was a farmer like the majority of Wasatch County residents. The 1870 census listed 56 percent of 128 Heber men as farmers; 25 percent had nonagricultural jobs; only 9.4 percent were business people. Farmers predominated because the settlers endeavored to grow their own crops in order to be self sufficient in a new community. But agriculture alone was not enough to support them, so many were involved in other occupations. In the late 1860s, for example, several men and women left the valley and worked on the Union Pacific Railroad and in gold mines in Nevada and California.

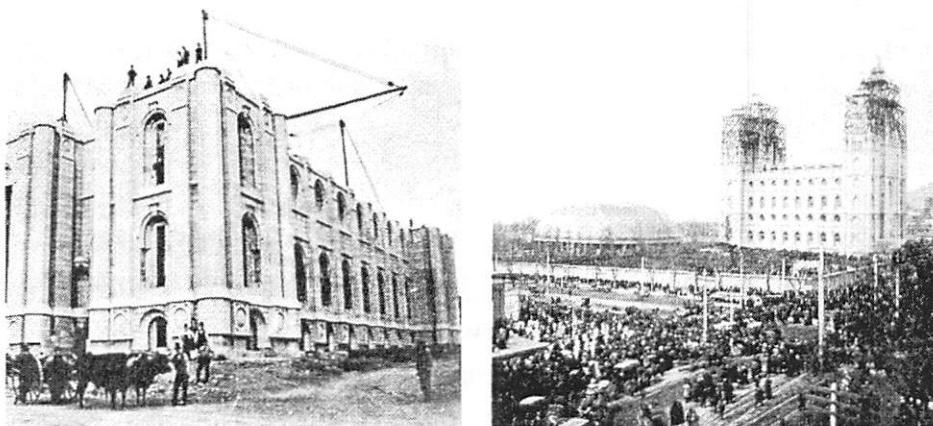
Later, gold and silver mines changed the socio-economic status of Wasatch County itself as well as the landscape. By 1880 there were fewer farmers in Heber City. Of the 266 men, only 36 percent were farmers. The number of laborers also had declined to 13.2 percent. The increasing population proved a larger base for businesses, and 18 percent of the men worked in commerce. The largest jump was in mining. In 1870 the census listed no miners, but by 1880 14.7 percent of the men worked in the Park City Mining District. Wasatch County residents also continued to provide agricultural products to the workers in Summit County. In 1880 William Forman, true to his home-support philosophy, declared he was "sorry to see our hay

being hauled to Park City when our people need it so much.”¹¹

The reason for the jump in mining was that non-Mormons had started working in the rich ore areas along the county’s boundary with Summit County — parts of the Park City Mining District in the area where the north-south Wasatch Range meets the east-west Uinta Range. A noted geologist, John Boutwell referred to this area as the “most extensive and richest ore bodies in the range.” The mines produced lead, silver, gold, zinc, and copper.¹² Most importantly, these mines brought money into Wasatch County for the development of business and industry.

By 1880 there were 1,775 adults over age 19 and 3,000 children in Wasatch County, a sixfold increase from 1860 to 1880. Utah’s population as a whole increased thirteen fold between 1850 and 1880.¹³ Over half of the 251 residents in the community of Heber in 1870 were from the British Isles, and nearly that many of the 86 adults in Wallsburg were from the same area. Very few of the adults were born in Utah — only 2.3 percent in Wallsburg and 2.4 percent in Heber. After 1880 the number of Utah natives steadily increased with the immigration of other families and the families having more and more children. By 1900, nearly all of Wallsburg’s residents were Utah born.

At this same time the Church was enduring various challenges. Besides tremendous growth within Utah and changes in the attitude toward the Mormons nationwide, leaders of the growing Church were trying to juggle their many objectives. Among the most important responsibilities, the Church desired to finish the 40-year



Construction on the Salt Lake Temple began in 1853 and finished in 1893.

Salt Lake Temple construction project.

The Salt Lake Temple was envisioned just after the saints came into the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, but the temple was not completed until 1893. President Young laid the cornerstones of the Temple in a solemn ceremony on 6 April 1853 (it had been revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith that April 6th was the exact day of Christ's birth), not quite six years after seeing the temple in vision.¹⁴ He sensed that he would not live long enough to attend its dedication. President Young had insisted on only the best materials and craftsmanship in the temple's construction. Forty years later, after the hard work and dedication of thousands of Latter-day Saints, President Wilford Woodruff — the succeeding president of the Church — prepared himself and the Church for the dedication ceremonies.

Construction of the Salt Lake Temple had been delayed many times, but since the 1880s the full resources of the Church were consecrated to its completion. In April 1892, President Woodruff directed the laying of the capstone in connection with general conference. The audience of 50,000 saints (the largest assembly to that time) filled Temple Square and adjoining streets.

The next month the saints held a special fast, and the money saved was sent to the First Presidency to help finish the temple by 6 April 1893, the fortieth anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone. Church leaders urged the members to discipline their thoughts and lives, to disregard partisan political feelings, and to make themselves pure in all things so they would be ready to participate in the temple dedication.

On 6 April 1893, dedicatory ceremonies commenced. President Woodruff saw in the events of the day the fulfillment of a prophetic dream. He told the saints that many years before in a nocturnal visitation Brigham Young had given him the keys of the temple and had told him to dedicate it to the Lord. In his opening remarks President Woodruff prophesied that from this time the power of Satan would be broken and his power over the saints diminished, and there would be an increased greater interest in the gospel message.¹⁵

The Salt Lake Temple became the symbol of the Church in many ways, even though three other Temples had been completed in the West: the St. George Temple (6 April 1877), the Logan Temple (17 May 1884), and the Manti Temple (21 May 1888). Forty years of sacrifice and work, some of it the finest workmanship the Church could produce, went into the structure. Earlier Church leaders had sent Latter-day Saints on art missions to France where they studied under the world's best artists so that the inside walls of the temple could be properly adorned. The saints were now firmly convinced that their efforts had not been in vain.

PLURAL MARRIAGE AND STATEHOOD

From 1887 to 1890 the relationship between the Latter-day Saints and the United States government and its citizens continued to deteriorate. President Woodruff wrote concerning this on New Year's Eve 1889: "Thus ends the year 1889 and the word of the Prophet Joseph Smith is beginning to be fulfilled that the whole nation would turn against Zion and make war upon the saints. The nation has never been filled so full of lies against the saints as to day."¹⁶ A political and moral battle with the U.S. government over the constitutionality of the practice of plural marriage had begun.

The Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887 included provisions aimed at destroying the Church as a political and economic entity. The law officially dissolved The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as a legal corporation and required the Church to forfeit to the government all property in excess of \$50,000. Government officials set out immediately to confiscate Church holdings. In an attempt to stop the flow of European converts, the government dissolved the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company, the chief agency for immigration. More and more saints were stripped of their voting rights. Schools were placed under the direction of the federally appointed territorial supreme court. U.S. marshals arrested more men who were then nearly automatically sentenced to prison. Among them was President George Q. Cannon.

Although arrests and imprisonments caused families to suffer, the greatest problem for the Church was the inability to acquire and hold the funds necessary to build temples, do missionary work, publish material, and provide for the welfare of the saints. Church leaders succeeded in getting their case before the United States Supreme Court, arguing that the confiscation of Church property under the Edmunds-Tucker Act was unconstitutional. But in May 1890 the Court upheld, in a five to four decision, the constitutionality of all the government had done under the Edmunds-Tucker Law. Though disappointed by the decision, there was little the saints could do to ward off the impending economic destruction of the Church.

The gradual loss of voting rights added to the distress of the Church. The Edmund-Tucker Act provided for the disfranchisement of anyone convicted of polygamy or unwilling to pledge obedience to anti-polygamy laws. By 1890 some 12,000 Utah citizens had been deprived of their right to vote.

Church leaders sought in vain to convince the government officials that the charge of Mormons being disloyal to the United States was false. Church members

were asked to fast on 23 December 1889 to implore the help of God during this crisis. In January 1890 the People's Party, the Church's political organization, held a rousing meeting to gain support for its candidates. Nevertheless, the non-Mormons gained control over the government in Salt Lake City in the February balloting.

Because so many Latter-day Saints were barred from voting, the anti-Mormon party won the Salt lake City school election in July 1890, and with it control of secular education in the territorial capital. Before July ended, the Supreme Court ruled that children from polygamist marriages could not inherit their father's estate. In the first week in August the anti-Mormon party won most of the elected offices in Salt Lake and Weber counties. Finally, Church leaders learned that the U.S. attorney for Utah was conducting an investigation as to whether or not Church property, especially the temples in St. George, Logan, Manti, and Salt Lake City, were being properly escheated as had been directed by the United State Congress. President Woodruff received confirmation that the U.S. government, in spite of an 1888 agreement promising that temples would not be disturbed, was going to confiscate them.

President Woodruff wrote in his journal that after much anguish, prayer, and discussion with his counselors, he was prepared to act "for the temporal salvation of the Church."¹⁷ He said later that God had shown him by revelation exactly what would take place if plural marriage did not cease. He was shown that the Church would suffer. He wrote:

Confiscation and loss of all the Temples, and the stopping of all the ordinances therein, both for the living and the dead, and the imprisonment of the First Presidency and Twelve and the heads of families in the Church, and the confiscation of personal property of the people (all of which of themselves would stop the practice); or, after doing and suffering what we have through our adherence to this leave the Prophets, Apostles and fathers at home, so that they can instruct the people and attend to the duties of the Church, and also leave the Temples in the hands of the saints, so that they can attend to the ordinances of the Gospel, both for the living and dead.¹⁸

On 24 September 1890 President Woodruff showed other Church leaders the document that would eliminate the teaching and practicing of plural marriage in the

Church. The document would be known as the Manifesto, included in the *Doctrine and Covenants* as Declaration 1. After they approved it and prepared it for publication, President Woodruff declared that the Lord had made it plain to him what he was to do and that it was the right thing. The Manifesto was immediately released to the nation's newspapers the next day. It even appeared in the *Washington Post*, having been given to that newspaper by Utah's delegate, John T. Caine.

Woodruff and others made the document a part of the Church's teachings on 4 October 1890 when it was announced in general conference that plural marriage would not be practiced in the Church. To solidify his words, President Woodruff promised the following to the Church:

I say to Israel, the Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as president of this Church to lead you astray. It is not in the programme. It is not in the mind of God. If I were to attempt that the Lord would remove me out of my place, and so He will any other man who attempts to lead the children of men astray from the oracles of God and from their duty.¹⁹

The federal government accomplished their goal to "cleanse" the Mormons of immorality. With the issuance of the Manifesto the Church and the government was becoming closer and closer to reconciliation. A new era of understanding began. The quest for Utah statehood was renewed. Before Congress would allow this to happen; however, it required the Church to relinquish participation in politics. The Church's party — the People's Party — would have to be disbanded, and Utah's citizens would have to align themselves with national political parties.

Establishing the national Democratic and Republican parties in Utah proved exceedingly difficult. Traditionally the saints had leaned toward the Democratic Party because the Republicans, who had been in power most of the time since 1861, had promoted and enforced the anti-polygamy legislation. Furthermore, the Democratic-appointed officials of 1885-1889 had been more lenient with the saints. Considering the political tendency of Church members and the fact that most non-Mormons in Utah were Republican oriented, the First Presidency wanted to avoid the Democrats becoming another Church party.

Church leaders encouraged some of their members to vote Republican. This would demonstrate to national party leaders that a viable two-party system could exist in Utah. This method was effective, and by 1892 both the Republican Party and the

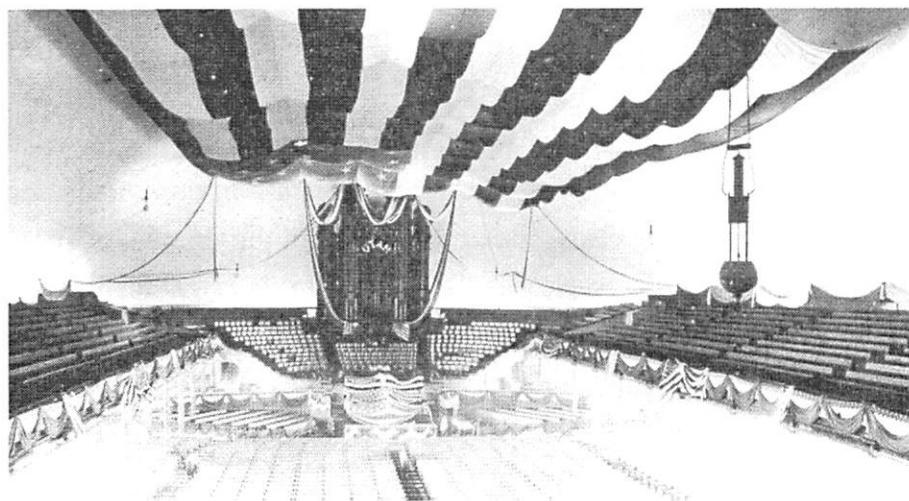
Democratic Party was strong in Utah politics.

Delicate negotiations continued for Utah statehood in both houses of Congress. Of importance to most congressmen was an assurance that the Church was sincere about stopping the practice of plural marriage and staying out of the political process. In July 1894 the Utah Enabling Act was passed. Throughout the rest of 1894 and in 1895, Utahns, both in and out of the Church, cooperated to produce a state constitution that achieved Congress's acceptance. The constitution specifically prohibited plural marriage and ensured the complete separation of church and state.

UTAH'S QUEST FOR STATEHOOD

On 4 January 1896, Utah became a state, with Heber M. Wells as its first governor. Utahns, now secure in the Great Basin, anticipated the twentieth century with confidence. When LDS Church President Wilford Woodruff died on 2 September 1898, the presidency fell upon the equally seasoned 88-year-old Lorenzo Snow. No previous Church president had entered this office at such an advanced age.

By the time Utah had achieved statehood, the Isaac Oliver Wall family had increased with several children being born. On 14 September 1884, twelve years before President Grover Cleveland pronounced Utah with official statehood, Cecil Isaac Wall was born. The Walls were living in Wallsburg at the time of the



The Salt Lake Tabernacle was decorated for Utah's statehood ceremony in 1896.

announcement. Their first ten years of marriage had been productive years. Their family was growing, their farm was prospering, and their community was strengthening. Wasatch County followed the state and national trends for the most part. Farmers broadened their crop base. Instead of growing only hay and grain, they planted vegetables — especially peas and sugar beets.

In 1889 the coming of the Rio Grande Western Railroad increased the markets for these agricultural goods as well as for local livestock. Many communities incorporated; the local Mormon leaders no longer regulated civil affairs. Municipal services increased. Schools improved, and a high school was finally established in Heber City in 1907. Theaters, bands, choirs, and ball teams provided entertainment. When the Ute Indian Reservation was opened, more settlers moved east, and eventually residents voted to form Duchesne County in 1914. The federal government created the Uinta National Forest in 1897; it occupied most of the eastern part of the new county. The Forest Service oversaw grazing and other uses of that land. In 1902 the U.S. Congress passed the Newlands Act, creating the Reclamation Service. Federal funds paid for dams, canals, and other irrigation projects to help "reclaim the arid West."

ISAAC WALL: LOCAL POLITICIAN AND LAW ENFORCER

In some ways, life did not change. As in much of rural Utah, statehood, the incorporation of towns and cities, and a diversified economy did not end the Mormon's domination of the county. The Church gatherings were still where nearly all the towns' residents met. The people used these settings to begin, support, or defeat new projects.

Isaac was an integral part of the growth and development in Heber Valley. Like his father, Isaac served in many positions of leadership in the Church and in the community. For many years Isaac was the president of the Quorum of Elders in the Wallsburg Ward of the Church. He was also a Sunday School teacher for many years. In the community, Isaac was appointed to be the justice of the peace, was named as president of the Heber Valley Amusement Board and in 1907, Isaac was elected Marshall of Wasatch County. He made all these important accomplishments while living in the small town of Wallsburg.

At the turn of the century, Isaac's life had changed from a life of farming and raising his small children to the life of the Wasatch County Marshall and raising

teenagers. After his tenure as Wasatch County Marshall, the Walls moved to the city of Heber as Isaac accepted a job as city sheriff. Leaving their established home and farm for the rapidly growing city of Heber was a change for the family. He would serve as city mayor for eight years and city marshal for two years. Isaac Wall played an important role with this change. All county offices became elected positions and three commissioners, county clerk, recorder, auditor, treasurer, assessor, attorney, and surveyor. Wasatch County's population was so small that the position of clerk, recorder and auditor were combined in 1899. The first Wasatch County commissioners elected in 1896 were John Clyde, Isaac Wall, and Wilford Van Wagoner. These officials made decisions regarding roads, mining, and unincorporated areas of the county.²⁰

In Heber, Isaac's talents for construction and engineering were appreciated and put to use. While in Heber, Isaac built three large schools, three Church and seminary buildings in Heber City and assisted in building of many other structures in Heber.

On 28 August 1914, Marcia Wall died of Bright's Disease in their home in Heber. It was her fifty-seventh birthday. Her death was a tragedy to the Wall family, especially Isaac who had loved her dearly for 38 years of marriage. On 30 August she was buried in the Wallsburg Cemetery, where the Walls had spent their early years of marriage. She left behind her seven children ranging in age from 37 to 19 years.

Isaac mourned her death for the rest of his life. After five years of living alone, he married Fanny J. Young Clyde, whose husband, John Clyde, a co-commissioner with Isaac Oliver died from an appendicitis attack on 13 August 1898. Fanny was an industrious lady with experience in many jobs in the Intermountain West. In 1900, she worked as a cook for more than 30 men at the Mountain Lake Mine in Summit County. Two years later, she moved to Shelley, Idaho with her daughter Afton and son-in-law Jack Kimball. While living there she worked in a cleaning plant and learned how to block hats. She lived and worked there until World War I broke out and Jack enlisted. She returned to Heber.

She started a little cleaning establishment where the J.C. Penney store later stood in Heber City. One day as she cleaned clothes, the cleaning fluid overheated causing an explosion. Fanny was caught in the explosion and was severely burned on her face. More than one third of her body was scalded by the boiling water. Experts said that she could not be cured. However, Fanny had full faith that she would make a

strong recovery. She summoned Elder J. Golden Kimball, the father of her son-in-law and member of the Church's First Quorum of the Seventy, to give her a blessing. Two days later, Fanny began to recover. After having surgery where surgeons grafted healthy skin onto the burned portions of her body, her family transported her to Roosevelt, Utah on a feather bed. After living in Roosevelt for a time, she returned to Heber. It was at this time that she renewed her acquaintance with Isaac and later married him.

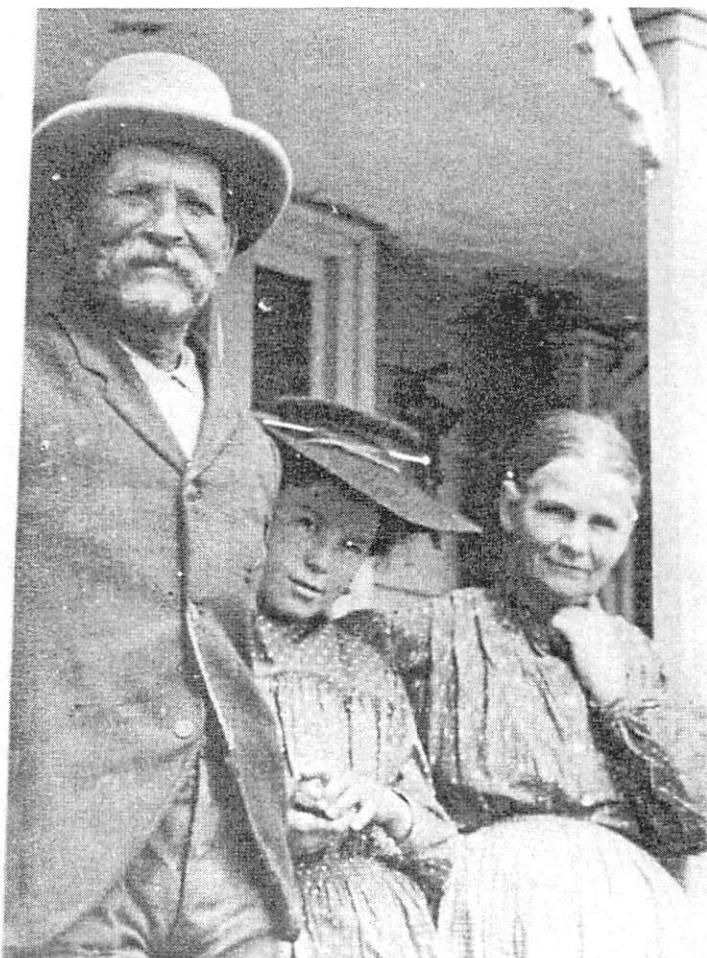
THE WALLS DURING WORLD WAR I

By the completion of the second decade of the twentieth century, the position of the United States in the world had changed. World War I started in June 1914, and complex alliances brought other nations into involvement. What followed was worldwide conflict. When the United States entered the war on 6 April 1917, many Americans responded to President Woodrow Wilson by volunteering to fight to protect democracy. Others fought from their home front in industry by making and supplying the necessities to soldiers overseas. Following the war, America welcomed back its men who sought to start their civilian lives again. But prewar America had transformed into a super power in the world. Isaac's son, Cecil, fought in the war. He was the first from Wasatch County to enlist for active duty after war was declared. From 1914 to 1918, Cecil served on the destroyer, *U.S.S. Kearsarge*.

For many Americans, the early 1920s or the "Roaring Twenties" symbolized the end of conflict and disease. It was a decade of parties, momentary prosperity and hope. The outbreak of war brought high prices for agricultural and mining goods; but with the conclusion of the war came dropping prices which resulted in depression. Utah entered a severe depression ten years before it hit the rest of the nation, which suffered the Great Depression in the 1930s. Another change for the returning soldiers was the attitude toward alcohol. Many sought to abolish the drink all together. In 1917, Utah called for statewide prohibition; the United State passed the Eighteenth Amendment which made it illegal to possess intoxicant drinks nationwide in 1920.

The Mormon church encouraged its members to abstain from the use of liquor. In Mormon communities, including Heber, church and civil leaders took a variety of steps to curtail the sale of liquor. In March 1879, during a Heber East Ward priesthood meeting, stake president Abram Hatch proposed a ban on whiskey. The next year the evils of alcohol continued to be discussed in local meetings. Some Mormons,

especially those involved in selling alcoholic beverages, were uncomfortable with this school of thought. In defense of his actions, saloon owner Thomas T. Watson maintained in a meeting that he did not bring liquor into the county to make a profit but to “oblige his neighbors.” Watson was not alone in providing this service. Despite church leaders’ attempts to stop the use of liquor in the valley, there were two saloons in Heber City in 1888. Some local residents were especially concerned since young men went there to play billiard; city ordinances allowed pool tables only in the



Isaac Oliver Wall with his daughter, Ruby, and his wife, Marcia about 1910.

saloons.²¹

In 1906, Heber City had five saloons. City residents were beginning to follow a nationwide trend to prohibit the consumption of alcohol and sought to close the saloons. On 31 December 1908, the city closed all of its saloons. By 1910, there was no “liquor traffic” in the county. On a state level the Utah State Legislature passed a bill allowing local communities and counties to decide whether they would have prohibition. The new law required each town, city, and county to hold an election. The first vote was mandatory. The Utah Supreme Court ruled that all prosecutions for liquor violations before the 1911 law were illegal. So Heber’s law was not valid until the state passed its “local option” law. In June the Mormon Church in Wasatch County held a temperance meeting and organized a committee to make sure that all eligible voters went to the polls. Heber voted 459 to 32 to ban the sale of alcohol. In 1917 the



Isaac Oliver Wall died at the age of 82 on 14 May 1932.

Utah Legislature eliminated the “local option” and the entire state went dry.²²

For Wasatch County and much of America, the hope of the 1920s ended with the crash of the stock market in October 1929. The 1930s was a time of depression, unemployment, and agricultural disasters. Republican President Hoover and Democrat Utah Governor George H. Dern both believed that the Great Depression would be short-lived and that the private corporations of the state and nation would provide relief. Little did they know, it would take another World War and restructuring of the American welfare system that would pull America from its spiraling doldrums.

Isaac Oliver Wall was now a man in his eighties. His first wife had passed as had his second daughter Jessie. These two losses were troublesome to Isaac. Several illnesses made it difficult for him to walk. However, his generosity had not failed him. He gave all of his possessions, including two houses, to his remaining children. He always sought to provide for his family and to give them all he had. Even though it was difficult for him to get around, he and his wife would walk five miles to his daughter, Amy, and son, Cecil’s homes in Daniels for visits. The two would walk both ways instead of letting Cecil or Amy’s husband, Bill Nunley, hitch up a team of horses and take them back in a wagon. Later in his life when walking was almost impossible, this time together was important for Isaac and Fanny.

After a fall at his home, Isaac bruised his shoulder and dislocated it. This injury took a long time to mend. Another fall from the back door step of his home resulted in a fatal heart attack. Isaac Oliver Wall died at the age of 82 on 14 May 1932 in Heber. His life was dedicated to service to his family, his church, and his community. This service acts as a memorial to his family and friends throughout time. Isaac crossed the great plains of the United States as an infant. He used his hands to establish a community. He used his mind to make that community thrive. He used his love to unite his family.

ENDNOTES

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- ¹⁰. Carolyn H. Tolman, "Sturdy, Industrious Saints: A History of the Swiss in Early Midway, Utah, 1859-1920." As cited in Jessie L. Embry *A History of Wasatch County*, 55.
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- ¹⁵. Matthias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff: History of His Life and Labors* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), 582-583.
- ¹⁶. Wilford Woodruff Journals, 17 May 1888.
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- ¹⁸. Official Declaration — 1, Excerpts from Three Addresses by President Wilford Woodruff Regarding the Manifesto.
- ¹⁹. *Millennial Star*, 24 November 1890, 741.
- ²⁰. Mortimer, *How Beautiful Upon the Mountains*, 27-30.

²¹. Journal History, 14 March 1888, 5-6. As cited in Embry *History of Wasatch County*, 126.

²². *Wasatch Wave*, 24 March 1911, 4; 19 April 1912, 4; 23 June 1911, 5; 30 June 1911, 4.



The Heber City train depot was the center of the town's activity after 1899.